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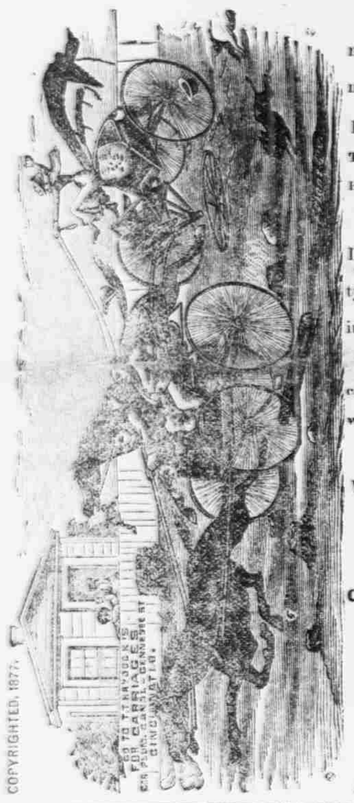
"THE GIRL I LEFT BEHIND ME."



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TERRIBLE NITRO-GLYCERINE.

Its Power of Annihilation as Proved by Many Dreadful Instances.

"Attending the frightful deaths that so frequently follow the handling of nitro-glycerine, in the oil regions," said Myron K. Paige, formerly an oil operator in Pennsylvania, "there is one feature, the mysterious nature of which is startling. It has puzzled scientific observation and study, and I do not believe to-day that any satisfactory explanation can be given of it. This singular feature is the almost complete annihilation of matter, especially of the human body, which, in a majority of cases, results from a fatal explosion of this deadly compound.

"I had a teamster once in my employ—poor Hank France. Like all men of his kind in the oil country there was nothing either above, below or on earth that he feared. He was in the habit of carrying nitro-glycerine to any well where I wanted to use it, and he and his companion, Warren Jack, actually got so reckless in handling the stuff that the other help I had would not stay at work when they knew Hank was coming in with glycerine, but went to a safe distance until he had deposited the explosive they required, and had gone away.

"Hank and Warren actually used to unload the stuff the same as they would a lot of bricks, Hank standing in the wagon and throwing a can to Warren some feet away, and Warren catching it and placing it on the ground in time to catch the next one that Hank tossed him. As it takes a man with a good set of nerves to even ride in a wagon when he knows there is nitro-glycerine under the seat, this manner of handling a compound that the slightest jar frequently explodes, will give you an idea of the sort of nerve these two men had. Each one knew that if Warren happened to miss catching a can, there would not be enough left of them to cover the bottom of a snuff-box, but hey had the daring to take the chances.

"No one ever knew what caused it, and no one would ever have known who it was that was wiped out, except from the fact that they knew who it was that would be coming that way with nitro-glycerine just about that time, and from one or two things we found; but when we heard the explosion that day we said: 'That's Hank's last trip!' The glycerine had exploded about a quarter of a mile from the well. We walked down there. There was the usual cellar that a few cans of the stuff always digs when it goes off and the usual lot of timber felled Three hundred feet off to the right of the road, in the woods, we found a wagon tire. We found the tail of one horse, and portions of the body of another. In another part of the woods a man's knee was picked up, and, although we searched over an area that it would have been impossible for any of the wreck to have been thrown, that was all we found except Hank's greasy old cap lying by the side of a stump, and his watch hanging on the limb of a tree.

"As thoroughly as that does nitro-glycerine do its work. All who have had anything to do with it in the oil regions have had illustration after illustration of its annihilative power. The iron frames of wagons, and even nitro-glycerine safes, have been removed from human vision by an explosion as effectually as if they had never been formed. Look at that poor reckless devil, George Doran, who disappeared at Red Rock a few year ago. He was walking along with two or three cans of glycerine slung over his shoulder in a bag. To rest himself he shifted the bag to the other shoulder. In doing so he jarred the cans together and disappeared, with a goodly portion of Red Rock. That man weighed all of 200 pounds. All that the most thorough search ever recovered of that 200 pounds of flesh and bone was a part of one foot—less than one pound!

"Some savants have attempted to explain the mystery of this characteristic of nitro-glycerine by the theory of instantaneous vaporization of matter. That might be true as to flesh, but could the great masses of bone in the human body be vaporized in the twinkling of an eye? Could iron be reduced to vapor in an instant? It doesn't seem so to me.

"Others offer the theory of atomization of matter. This theory was disproved by another most melancholy occurrence in Alleghany County, N. Y., two or three years ago. This case was not characterized by such utter annihilation as others. Charles Berridge, a well-known oil man, was blown up by nitro-glycerine. The ground around was covered with spotless, new-fallen snow. On either side was a high and abrupt hill, only a few rods apart. Berridge was a very large man, of perhaps 180 pounds weight. The remains of the poor man were searched for carefully and long, for he was a good man and a popular one. The coffin in which they were borne to the grave, contents and all, weighed but fifteen pounds! Now for the atomization theory. The greatest force of a nitro-glycerine explosion is always upward. If the matter had been reduced to atoms, however infinitesimal, in falling back upon that spotless snow some trace of them must have been seen upon it. But it remained as spotless as before."—*New York Sun.*

The Romance of Indian Corn.

Comparatively few even of those to whom corn is one of the most common of all objects, and who are in the habit of handling more or less of that noble grain every day, know how romantic a history it has. While there is no question as to its antiquity, there is much doubt about the place of its origin. It has been found in the tombs and ruins of South America, in the caves of Arizona, and in the mounds of Utah. The Smithsonian Institute has an ear of corn found in the tomb of a mummy, near Ariquipi, Peru, and Darwin mentions the head of a stalk found imbedded in a sea-drift eighty-five feet above the level of the sea. Petrified stalks and ears were found, perfect in appearance, in working a stone quarry near La. Prairie, in Illinois. In a neat and useful little manual, issued by J. C. Vaughan, it is said that those who claim Asia for the original home of maize, point to the representation of the plant found in an ancient Chinese book in the Royal Library in Paris, and tell of the grain being found in cellars of ancient houses in Athens. Rifaud speaks of finding the grain and ear of maize within the tomb of a mummy at Thebes in 1819. Some, like Corbett, claim that it is the corn of Scripture, and in support of the claim quote the following: "And it came to pass that He went through the cornfields on the Sabbath day; and His disciples, as they went, began to pluck the ears of the corn." Again, from Leviticus, ii., 14: "And if thou offer a meat offering of thy first fruits unto the Lord, thou shalt offer for the meat offering of thy first fruits green ears of corn dried by fire, even corn beated out of full ears." Leviticus, xxiii., 14: "And ye shall eat neither bread nor parched corn, nor green ears, until the self same day that ye have brought an offering unto your God." Genesis, xxxxi., 5 (concerning Pharaoh's second dream): "And he slept and dreamed the second time; and behold, seven ears of corn came up upon one stalk, rank and good." Job, xxiv., 24, says the wicked are "cut off as the tops of the ears of corn."

An unimpeachable history of Indian corn can never be written, as the subject is full of counterfacts, contradictions and speculations. Learned authorities, both early and late, have differed as to its origin—some claiming it a native of Asia, others of America.

The Number Nine.

The number 9 possesses some remarkable properties. If the nine digits, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, be added together the sum will be 45, which is equal to five times nine, and the sum of the digits of their sum, 4 and 5, is nine. If any number is subtracted from another having the same digits in a different order the remainder will be divisible by 9, and the sum of the digits of the remainder will also be divisible by 9. Subtracting 2,967,634 from 7,364,629 there remains 4,396,995. The sum of the digits, 4, 3, 9, 6, 9, 9, 5, is 45, which is divisible by 9. If any number be multiplied by 9, the sum of the digits or figures of the product will be divisible by 9. Nine times 43,780,135 is 394,021,215; the sum of the digits of this product is 27, a multiple of 9. If a number be subtracted from another having the same digits in a different order and one of the digits of the remainder erased, it can be found in the following manner: Add together the figures of the remainder that are left, divide the sum by 9, subtract the figure that remains after dividing by 9, from 9, and the last remainder will be the digit or figure sought. If there was no remainder 0 or 9 was erased.

Ask some one to write down a number and subtract from it another composed of the same digits in a different order, without letting you see either of them. Tell him you want all the figures of the remainder but one. By the above rule you can soon find the figure you have not seen. The feat will appear quite mysterious to the uninitiated. Here is an example: Subtracting 156,324 from 231,456, the remainder is 75,132. The sum of the figures 7, 5, 1, 3, is 16. Divide 16 by 9, we have a remainder of 7. Seven from 9 leaves 2, the other figure.

FLYING MACHINES.

Bill Nye Glances Critically at these Mechanical Birds.

A long and exhaustive examination of the history of flying machines enables me to give briefly some of the main points of a few for the benefit of those who may be interested in this science.

A Frenchman invented a flying machine, or dofunny, as we scientists it, in 1600 and something, whereby he could sail down from the woodshed and not break his neck. He could not rise from the ground like a lark and trill a few notes as he skimmed through the sky, but he could fall off an ordinary haystack like a setting hen, with the aid of his wings. His name was Besnier.

One hundred and twenty-five years after that a prisoner at Vienna named Jacob Dagen, told the jailer that he could fly. The jailer seemed incredulous, and so Jake constructed a pair of double-barrel umbrellas, that worked by hand, and fluttered with this machine into the air fifty feet. He came down in a direct line and in so doing ran one of the umbrellas through his thorax. I am glad it is not the custom now to wear an umbrella in the thorax.

In England during the present century several inventors produced flying machines, but in an evil hour agreed to rise on them themselves, and so they died from their injuries. Some came down on top of the machines, while others preceded their inventions by a few feet, but the result was the same. The invention of flying machines has always been handicapped, as it were, by this fact. Men invent a flying machine and then try to ride it and show it off, and thus they are prevented by death from perfecting their rolling stock, and securing their right of way.

In 1842 Mr. William Henderson got out a "two-propeller" machine, and tried to incorporate a company to utilize it for the purpose of carrying letters, running errands, driving home the cows, lighting the northern lights, and skimming the cream off the milky way, but it didn't seem to compete very successfully with other modes of travel, and so Mr. Henderson wrapped it up in an old tent and put it away in the haymow.

In 1853 Mr. J. H. Johnson patented a balloon and parachute dingus, which worked on the principle of a duck's foot in the mud. I use scientific terms because I am unable to express myself in the common language of the vulgar herd. This machine had a tail which, under great excitement, it would throw over the dash-board, as it bounded through the air.

Probably the biggest thing in its way under this head was the revival of flying under the presidency of the Duke of Argyle, the society being called the Great Britian æronautical society. This society made some valuable calculations, adding much to our scientific knowledge, and filling London with cripples.

In 1869 Mr. Joseph T. Kaufman invented and turned loose upon the people of Glasgow an infernal machine intended to soar considerably in a quiet kind of a way, and to be propelled by steam. It looked like the bird known in ornithology as the "flyupthecrick," and had an air-brake, patent coupler, buffer and platform. It was intended to hold two men on ice and a rosewood casket with silver handles. It was mounted on wheels, and as it did not seem to skim through the air very much, the people of Glasgow hitched a clothes-line to it and used it for a band wagon.

Rufus Porter invented an aerial dew dad ten years ago in Connecticut where so many crimes have been committed since Mark Twain moved there. This was called the "æroport," and was worked by springs connected with propellers. A saloon was suspended beneath it, I presume, on the principle that when a man is intoxicated he weighs a pound less. This machine floated around the rotunda of the Merchants' exchange, in New York city, eleven times, like a hen with he head cut off, but has not been on the wing much since then.

Other flying machines have been invented, but the air is not peopled with them as I write. Most of them have folded their pinions and sought the seclusion of the hen-house. It is to be hoped that very soon some such machine will be perfected whereby a man may flit from the fifth story window of the Grand Pacific hotel in Chicago to Montreal before breakfast, leaving nothing in the room but the furniture and his kind regards. Such an invention would be hailed with much joy, and the sale would be enormous. Now, however, the matter is still in its infancy. The mechanical birds invented for the purpose of skimming through the ether blue, have not skum. The machines were built with high hopes and a throbbing heart, but the aforesaid ether remains unskum as we go to press. The milky-way is in the same condition, awaiting the arrival of the fearless skimmer. Will man ever be permitted to pierce the utmost details of the sky and ramble around among the stars with a gum overcoat on? Sometimes I trow he will and then again I ween not.

Dog Stealing in New York.

This is a lay pursued by boys with much success, and it is surprising to see the ingenuity practiced, writes the New York correspondent of the Troy *Times*. During the summer the gentlemen generally have their canine pets kept in their stables, which the boys contrive to enter under various pretexts, and coax the dogs away by the use of little dainties. They then wait till the pet is advertised and get the reward. Another method is as follows: The pet dogs are frequently taken out to walk, being held by a cord. The boy-thief cunningly passes along and cuts the latter with his pocket-knife, then catches up the animal and runs away with it. The animal is then advertised and the thief gets the reward, which in some instances is $50. I noticed in one of our papers fourteen of such advertisements. It may be mentioned in this connection that the senior Bennett (founder of the *Herald*) was very fond of dogs and kept a number of the best breeds at his Fort Washington establishment. A butcher in that city once mentioned that Bennett had paid him $70 at one time merely for dog-meat. Rather a heavy bill, but a mere trifle for a millionaire. Bennett had waged war on mankind with such bitterness that he knew that his dogs were his only true friends.

Willing to Oblige Him.

A Chicago murder recalls a very old story of the Pacific Slope. A good-natured miner made his first trip to San Francisco, with a lot of gold dust for sale. So long as he had business on hand he attended to nothing else; but his dust once sold, he felt at liberty. He took a bath, got shaved, bought a suit of "store clothes," and a "biled shirt," registered at a first-class hotel, dressed, and then started out for a good time. As he left the hotel door, he met, standing there, a stranger with a pleasant-looking face, who nodded cheerfully to him. "Why, how do you do?" said the miner, grasping his hand with a squeeze like a vice, "I'm desperate glad to see you. Been lookin' for you some time, stranger. Let's take a drink." The stranger politely expressed his thanks, but declined. A puzzled look stole over the miner's face, then one of wrath, and finally one of unmistakable sorrow Under the latter mood he burst forth: "For heaven's sake, stranger, don't do me that way. I've just started out for a flyer, an' I don't want to kill a man in the first hour." The stranger reflected a moment, and responded quietly: "Well, I am a minister of the gospel, and I do not drink; but if you feel that way about it, I guess I will take a glass of soda water." It was fixed up on that basis.

Quicksands of Stock Speculation.

A Wall street broker philosophizes in the New York *Telegram* as follows about the quicksands of stock-jobbing. Every man comes to the conclusion, in the course of time, that he is an ass, and if he is inclined to dabble down here he will be proven an ass. Men who have nothing can come and try their luck; but those who have something to lose had better stay away. Talk about quicksands, the quicksands of stock-jobbing will swallow a man with a million or ten millions as easily as the ocean a steamer. There is Keene. He comes here with a couple of millions; he plays them and wins ten or fifteen more. Does he stop? Oh, no! He wants more, and now he is cleaned out. There's Villard. He makes several millions and wields a big house and—fails. Ten years ago I knew a man who had eleven millions and seven children. One day I asked him why he did not retire. His answer was, "I have eleven millions, I want just twelve, because I have seven children. My wish is to give them each a million and keep five for myself." That man died in a tenement house and his children are working for a dollar a day.

The unintelligibility of a brakeman's call, when announcing a station, is proverbial, says the Yuma (Cal.) *Sentinel*. The other day, however one called this station plain enough. There was a Sheriff on the train with some prisoners for the penitentiary, and upon announcing the arrival here the brakeman said: "Yuma! Change clothes; ten years for refreshment!"

HUMOROUS.

VOICES OF THE MORN.

'Tis happiness to lie awake
And watch the coming dawn,
That silently proclaims to all
"Another day is born!"

But with the rose there is a thorn
Which makes a man grow thin;
It is to hear: "There! John, get up,
And let the milkman in."

"Can you paint me a sign at once?" "Yes: what kind of a sign do you want?" "A sign of rain." A cloud lowered on the painter's brow, and, fearing an immediate storm, the humorist left.

"What did the lady sing for you?" inquired Jones of Brown. "Oh, Fair Dove! Oh, Fond Dove!" "What did she sing that old thing for?" "Because she was Fond Dove it, I presume."

"No, sir," said the worldly young man to the life insurance agent, "I don't feel prepared to have my life insured just yet. I do not care to feel that I would be worth more dead than I am alive."

If the King of Siam has 286 children—as the exchanges unanimously declare—the readiness with which he is parting with his white elephants is explained. He is obliged to sell to meet household expenses.

"They tell me my wife plays superbly." "So does mine." "How so? I never hear her." "The day after we were married she shut the piano, and hasn't opened it since." "Indeed! (A pause.) How she must love you."

It is the custom among a certain caste of Hindoos to cut off at the first joint the third and fourth fingers of a woman about to marry. This very much lessens the hair-pulling power of a Hindoo woman and renders her grasp upon the handle of a broomstick exceedingly uncertain.

"Your fare, young lady," said the stage-driver, as a pretty miss stepped from his vehicle, and was about tripping away. "Oh, thank you," responded the absent-minded little beauty; "I think your mustache becomes you real-well, too." She got her ride free.

A woman will wear a hat trimmed with birds, a sheaf of wheat, a small alligator and other articles of like description, and be perfectly happy. Yet that same woman will complain bitterly if her husband happens to come home with a plain, ordinary, every-day brick in his hat. Such, alas, is the inconsisteney of woman.

French Market in New Orleans.

Arriving at the French market at an early hour in the morning, says a New Orleans correspondent, your eyes behold a most remarkable sight. The buildings devoted to this use cover about three times the area embraced by the Chicago Exposition building, and you imagine that the inhabitants of the whole city have come forth to do their marketing and purchase their supplies for the week. You hear a number of languages spoken—French, Spanish, German and English—and see the representatives of every nation on the face of the earth. The French are talking English, the negroes are talking French, the German is trying his tongue at both, and the nonplussed Yankee shakes his head and wonders if the jargon heard at the building of the Tower of Babel has been waited to him across the lapse of centuries! In this wonderful market is offered for sale everything that is kept in the stores and shops of the city, and there is scarcely an imaginable human want that cannot be readily supplied—dry goods, groceries, clothing, notions, jewelry, poultry, meats, and for a variety, young puppies, alligators, parrots and mocking birds. The variety of salt-water fish was very fine, and the display of meats was a great surprise to Northerners, after witnessing the average poverty-stricken appearance of the Louisiana cattle. The mystery was solved by finding out from inquiry among the butchers that all this fine beef, pork and mutton comes from Texas.

Another Run on the Umpire.

Stubbs was seen going down Wisconsin street Sunday morning carrying a shot gun, a club and a revolver. A friend stopped him and inquired what was the meaning of all the warlike decoration. "Didn't you hear about it?" inquired Stubbs. "No, what was it?" further inquired the friend. "Why, I was chosen to umpire a game of base ball between the morning and evening newspaper reporters, and I propose to back up every decision I make. I'm not much on the run, but I can shoot like the mischief in case of emergency." Stubb's decisions, it is learned, were accepted without a murmur by the opposing nines.—*Peck's Sun.*